

## Millennium Challenge Corporation

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### Press Release

#### Albania Signs Millennium Challenge Corporation Threshold Program to Tackle Corruption

Tirana, Albania—Today, Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) CEO Ambassador John Danilovich participated in the signing of a \$13.85 million Threshold program for Albania at the Council of Ministers Building in Tirana. Albanian Minister of Finance Ridvan Bode and USAID Mission Director Harry Birnholz signed the agreement. Albanian Prime Minister Sali Berisha and U.S. Ambassador to Albania Marcie Ries observed the signing. The program is focused on improving the country's performance on MCC's Ruling Justly and Economic Freedom indicators and aims to reduce corruption through reforms in tax administration, public procurement, and business registration.

**"I congratulate the people and the government of Albania, first for qualifying for the Threshold Program, and also for putting together an integrated and results-oriented plan that addresses the critical and difficult issue of corruption,"** said MCC CEO Ambassador John Danilovich. **"This program is a manifestation of Albania's dedication to moving forward and embracing genuine development, growth, and poverty reduction. I would like to thank Ambassador Ries and her staff in Tirana, USAID Albania Mission Director Harry Birnholz and his staff, and Rodney Bent and our colleagues at MCC – who have all worked so very hard to bring us to this day."**

MCC's Threshold Program is designed to assist countries that are on the "threshold" of Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) eligibility for Compacts and are committed to policy reforms that improve their performance necessary to qualify for MCA Compact assistance. MCC measures policies in three areas — Ruling Justly, Investing in People, and Encouraging Economic Freedom — using 16 policy indicators that have a demonstrated link to poverty reduction and growth. Threshold Program assistance is used to help such countries address specific policy weaknesses indicated by the countries' scores on these policy indicators, which are central to the criteria and methodology for MCA Compact eligibility.

To date, MCC has approved or committed nearly \$100 million under its Threshold Program, including \$35 million to tackle corruption in Paraguay, \$13 million to help improve girls' primary education in Burkina Faso, \$21 million to help Malawians fight corruption, and \$11 million to help Tanzanians fight corruption and strengthen the rule of law.

In addition, MCC has signed Compacts totaling over \$1.5 billion with eight countries: Madagascar, Cape Verde, Honduras, Nicaragua, Georgia, Vanuatu, Benin, and Armenia. MCC is also actively engaging with other eligible countries to assist them in Compact development.

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*Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), a U.S. government corporation designed to work with some of the poorest countries in the world, is based on the principle that aid is most effective when it reinforces good governance, economic freedom, and investments in people that promote economic growth and elimination of extreme poverty.*

**A fact sheet that provides further details about Albania's Threshold program is attached.**